

CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
September 24, 2014 Minutes

The Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) of the City of Mesa met on September 24th, 2014,
at 6:00pm in the Lower Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E. First Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Denise Heap, Chair
Mark Tompert, Vice Chair
Cheryl Anderson
Colleen Byron
Karen Frias-Long
Frank Johnson
Tony Liuzzo
Cliff Moon
Talmage Pearce
Lu Ann Schmidt
Nadia Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Andrea Alicoate
Ruth Giese
Kelly Gregan

GUESTS

Karen Kurtz
Bob Schmidt

1. Chair's Call to Order.

Ms. Heap began the meeting at 5:56pm.

2. Items from Citizens Present.*

Mr. Schmidt spoke regarding the Veterans Task Force, which he participated in, and the need to continue supporting veterans. Mr. Schmidt stated that he personally feels as though not enough is being done in Mesa to recognize veterans or prevent discrimination against veterans. Mr. Schmidt stated that he has informed Councilmembers of his wish to create an 'Operation Welcome Home' program in Mesa, and appreciates Councilmember Kavanaugh's attempt to include veteran recognition at the Celebration of Freedom event in July. Mr. Schmidt would like to see more recognition and programs offering assistance or discounts to those who have served. Mr. Schmidt was advised that the board will be discussing related topics later in the agenda and invited him to listen in. Ms. Schmidt stated that he was not able to attend the remainder of the meeting but left his contact information and the following brochures: Welcome to the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Glad to Have You; The Fraternal Order of Eagles, Those Who Serve Program; Operation Welcome Home, Gilbert, Arizona. Ms. Anderson thanked Mr. Schmidt for his dedication and for serving our Country.

3. Approval of minutes from the August 23rd, 2014 Strategic Planning meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Liuzzo to approve the August 23rd, 2014 meeting minutes, Mr. Tompert seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Discuss, revise and approve of the 2014-2015 Strategic Plan.

A motion was made by Mr. Tompert to approve the 2014-2015 Strategic Plan, Dr. Liuzzo seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Hear a presentation from the City Attorney regarding the Open Meeting Law and Conflicts of Interest Law.

Ms. Gregan, Assistant City Attorney for the City of Mesa, gave a presentation on Arizona's Open Meeting Law. The Open Meeting Law (A.R.S. 38-431) ensures that the public has an opportunity to observe what the governing body, including HRAB, is doing and how it is being done. This means that all meeting notices and

agendas must be posted in advanced and held in a public place. Ms. Gregan reviewed the specifics of the law including that quorum must be met to conduct meetings. For the purposes of HRAB, a quorum of the full board would consist of six members or more, for sub-committees a quorum consist of the majority of the committee. Ms. Byron questioned if a sub-committee is made up of two persons, can those two members have lunch together to discuss board related topics. In response, Ms. Gregan stated that she will follow up with the more information for small committees. Additional factors to consider with Open Meeting Law are that it also pertains to means of communication such as emails, phone calls, letters, etc. Ms. Heap questioned if staff is able to transmit information from one board member to the full board, when not related to voting matters or agenda items (ex: event notices). In response, Ms. Gregan informed that staff is unable to disseminate information or material that is not made available to the public; however, Ms. Gregan will follow up with more clarification on the subject matter. Ms. Alicoate reminded board members to refrain from the 'reply all' function when emailing to comply with the Open Meeting Law.

Ms. Gregan further explained that Open Meeting Law gives the public the right to attend, listen, tape record and videotape meetings, but it does not require that the public can speak on an issue. It is common practice in the City of Mesa to allow citizen engagement through an Open Call to the Public. Open Call allows the board to limit speaking time and prohibit disruptive behavior. Ms. Giese questioned if the public is allowed to speak on individual agenda items, or if they can only speak during the specific item, 'Items from Citizens Present.' Ms. Gregan responded that citizens can speak to any agenda item. If the public brings up an issue that is not an agenda item, the board's response should be limited to directing staff to study the matter or add the matter to a future agenda. Dr. Liuzzo stated that he has questioned the term 'citizen' when used for Open Call. Does 'citizen' mean of the United States, of Mesa or simply to refer to persons who wish to make a comment. In response, Ms. Gregan stated that to her knowledge this term is used generally among all City of Mesa boards and committees, but she will clarify and report back.

Ms. Gregan briefly explained the Conflict of Interest Law (A.R.S. 38-503). This law states that any public officer, who has, or whose relative have, a financial or ownership interest in an issue before the board shall declare conflict and refrain from participating in any manner in the decision (detailed exceptions do apply). If an HRAB member feels they may have a conflict of interest, they must state so on record and refrain from participation on the topic before, during or after any discussion. Ms. Heap asked Ms. Gregan to advise board members on when and how to report gifts. Board members were advised that gifts exceeding \$50 must be declared by filing a statement with the City's Clerks Office.

6. Hear and discuss on HRAB recommendations for the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion & Diversity Report.

Ms. Kurtz, a third party consultant, recapped how HRAB derived to the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion & Diversity Report. A statistical survey was conducted at the beginning of the year by Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University, HRAB conducted three community dialogues, and participation for community input was available for a month-long span. A cumulative report has been drafted to summarize all of the findings and a copy of the report will be provided to Mayor and Council upon its completion. HRAB is now at the final phase where they will discuss and include their recommendations to the City Council based on the community response.

Ms. Kurtz asked the board members to individually consider what approaches might be most effective in addressing the issues raised by the lengthy assessment process they had undertaken. The report results made clear that there would be no one solution that could address all of the issues raised, but Ms. Kurtz encouraged HRAB to be considerate of the themes that emerged from the community dialogues data, namely recognition for veterans, outreach and communication, leadership, ways to come together, legal protection and education, when crafting potential recommendations. Ms. Kurtz provided sheets of paper to each member who wrote down individual recommendations and placed them the board.

After all of the recommendations where placed on the board, Mr. Moon noted his concern with the recommendation to rename Pioneer Park to Pioneer Veterans Park, instead he would prefer to recommend that an area or monument be named in tribute to veterans be included in the new Downtown Mesa Center Plan. Mr. Pearce also agreed that he is not comfortable renaming a park when it has already been symbolically named. Dr. Liuzzo made a motion to eliminate his prior motion which included the recommendation to rename Pioneer Park (see discussion under agenda item 9 which took before this item) and support of the Hometown Heroes

program and instead accept the recommendations as currently listed. Mr. Tompert seconded the motion. Ms. Heap opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Frias-Long questioned details of the Hometown Heroes program including the hardship of program cost. Ms. Alicoate explained that cost of the program is placed on applicants, however the best way to support the program would be to encourage individual and business contributions so funding is available to those who cannot afford it. Support and promotion of the Hometown Hero's campaign was added back to list of recommendations.

Below is the list of all of the recommendations placed on the board:

Recognition of Veterans

- Support/Promote the Hometown Hero's Campaign
- Veterans Memorial in New Downtown Mesa Center Plan
- Banners on Solid Waste Vehicles & City Website to Thank and Celebrate Veterans during Memorial and Veterans Day
- Create an Annual Veterans Memorial Event

Outreach and Communication

- Create a City Policy for Translation of City Services and Materials to be Printed in Spanish, Asian and Other Languages as Needed
- Hire a PIO for Spanish Speakers
- Purchase a Minimum of One Braille Embosser and Associated Software for the Library
- Create a City Policy for PSAs to be Promoted in the Hispanic Community and Medias

Leadership

- Appoint a Disability Advisory Board to Assess the Needs and Make Recommendations for this Population
- Hire ADA Coordinator and Title VI Coordinator
- Incorporate Human Rights Campaign Grading System for All Subgroups and Report Annually to the City Council
- Verbal Diversity Statements of Support from Mayor and Council
- City Non-Discrimination Statement on City Website
- City of Mesa Develops a Diversity Branding Campaign with Logo Competition
- Boards and Committees of the City to be More Reflective of Demographics
- Encourage Leadership Internships/Opportunities for Under-Represented Groups
- Appoint a Hispanic Task Force to Assess the Needs of this Population
- Appoint a LGBT Task Force to Assess the Needs of this Population
- Gender Identity Policy for City Employees

Ways to Come Together

- Create an Annual Diversity Celebration with Interactive Activities and Information – Open to the Community and Welcoming of All Groups
- More Support of Mesa's Subgroups and their Celebrations

Legal Protection

- City Ordinance – Non-Discrimination Ordinance with Federally Protected Classes and those not in Federal Law: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Military Status and Veterans

Education

- Videotaping of Board Presentations and Events and Posted on City Website
- Encourage the School District to Sponsor/Host Educational Activities that Address Cultural and Diverse Dynamics
- Create a Listing of all Advocacy Groups and Churches

Dr. Liuzzo requested the Chair to call the question. Ms. Heap asked member to vote, the motion carried unanimously to include all of the listed recommendations in the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion & Diversity Report.

7. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Youth Diversity Education Team.

- Provide an update on expanding youth involvement with the Community Cinema Series.

Ms. Frias-Long explained that a staff member from the Diversity Office currently works to promote the Community Cinema Series Event. They have asked YDET to take on the promotion and planning of the April event for the film titled, 'The Homestretch'. Ms. Heap added that currently the films are being shown at the Dobson Ranch Library and Dobson High School, and staff is doing a great job at including targeted youth groups.

- Provide an update on Diversity Youth Survey in order to explore ways to connect with youth and educate them on diversity related issues.

Ms. Frias-Long stated that a survey was finalized for dissemination to question youth on how they would like to be contacted with diversity related information or how they would like to get such information. Copies of the survey are available from staff. Board members are encouraged to take some to pass out.

- MLK Committee's Youth Leadership Development Conference.

Mr. Moon advised that the Martin Luther King Jr. Committee is planning a Youth Leadership Development Conference in April. YDET is offering their support by assisting to find potential speakers for the breakout sessions as well as interested funders or endorsements.

8. Hear, and discuss on items presented by the Ad Hoc Disabilities Action Team.

- Provide an update on the educational awareness campaign related to service animals and ADA regulations for businesses.

Mr. Tompert informed that staff is currently in the process of creating the final brochure. The brochure will be available for review for content, graphics, etc. soon.

- Provide an update on town hall meetings to educate the community, business, and leadership on mental health and substance abuse issues.

Mr. Tompert stated that sub-committee agreed to hold two or three Town Hall meetings. DAT will begin to looking into topics, who is going to be involved, when they will take place and where.

- Provide an update on the ways to evaluate the adequacy of services and programs for people with disabilities and the implementation of ADA.

Mr. Tompert noted that DAT made a motion to include, 'Appoint a Disability Advisory Board to Assess the Needs and Make Recommendations for this Population'. This motion was included in the list of recommendations approved by HRAB.

- Provide an update on the need for and feasibility of creating a Psychiatric Recovery Center in the East Valley.

Mr. Tompert stated that they will continue to educate themselves on related issues in order to address this topic more in-depth in the future. Mr. Tompert indicated that he has forwarded links to staff to offer for further dissemination.

9. Hear, discuss, and take action on items presented by the Ad Hoc Veterans Task Force.

- Recommendations to the Board from the Veterans Task Force.

Mr. Tompert stated that they received six recommendations from the Veterans Task Force, which met over the course of a year. The purpose of the task force was to be a temporary group that provided top priorities

regarding veteran issues. The Veterans Task Force requested the following six items be forwarded for consideration by HRAB:

1. Veteran Expo or Hiring Event
2. Establish and Increase Number Veteran-Supportive Organizations (Business, Non-profits, etc.)
3. Homeless Veteran Facility (Permanent Veteran-supportive Housing)
4. Training to Educate Organizations on How to Become More Veteran-Supportive
5. Permanent City of Mesa Staff Member to Handle Veteran and Military Family Issues
6. Veteran Town Hall Meeting/Forum

Items are not listed in order of importance but rather the six things that should be done. Mr. Tompert explained that the AmeriCorps Vista member designated as the Veterans Outreach Coordinator is no longer serving in the position and did not complete the needs assessment report meant to accompany these requests. Mr. Tompert advised that the board must now decide if they would like to further the recommendation to Council on any or all of these items. Mr. Tompert concluded by stating that task force participants were also encouraged to work on any project they would like to see happen and to continue making their own individual contacts.

Ms. Anderson expressed her concern for the lack of report and institutional knowledge that left with the Veterans Outreach Coordinator. Mr. Tompert concurred but stated that decisions were made at the State and Federal level through the AmeriCorps Vista program. Ms. Heap questioned staff if another Vista member would be coming on board to fulfill the same duties. In response, Ms. Giese stated that they anticipate a new AmeriCorps Vista member in February 2015. The candidate's focus would be diversity related which will include veterans and initiatives provided by the Diversity Office. Ms. Anderson questioned if information can be given to Veteran Task Force participants, such as Mr. Schmidt, as a follow up from the work that was initiated. Mr. Tompert informed that task force contributors will be receiving a certificate and letter in recognition of their participation. Ms. Schmidt also commented that recognition can be given by appointing a veteran in a future board vacancy.

Ms. Heap advised of a new program being offered by the City of Mesa, Hometown Heroes Military and Veterans Banner Program. Ms. Heap stated that HRAB can offer their own support and include support as part of their recommendations to City Council in the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion & Diversity Report. Ms. Heap also stated that Pioneer Park will be divided into segments and gardens and the board could potentially recommend for one of those to be named on honor of veterans. A motion was made by Dr. Liuzzo to recommend supporting the Hometown Heroes program and for a segment of Pioneer Park to be named in honor of veterans, the motion was seconded Mr. Tompert seconded. Ms. Heap opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Anderson asked if they could recommend for the entire park to be renamed rather than just a segment. Mr. Tompert suggested using a combination, so it would be referred as 'Pioneer-Veterans' Park. Dr. Liuzzo amended his previous motion to reflect the recommendation to rename the entire park as opposed to just a segment. The motion carried unanimously.

Note: This agenda item was discussed prior to item 6. Please refer back to item 6 for final recommendations to be included in the Mesa Speaks, Mesa Listens: Inclusion & Diversity Report.

10. Discuss and take action on the cancellation or rescheduling of the following board meetings:

- Rescheduling the November 26th, 2014 meeting to November 19th, 2014 at 6pm.
- Cancellation of December 24th, 2014 meeting.
- Rescheduling the May 27th, 2014 meeting to May 20th, 2015 at 6pm.

A motion was made by Dr. Liuzzo to reschedule the November 26th, 2014 meeting to November 19th, 2014 at 6pm; cancel the December 24th, 2014 meeting; and reschedule the May 27th, 2014 meeting to May 20th, 2015 at 6pm, Ms. Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

11. Hear, discuss and take action on conferences and/or meetings.

- Police Senior Advisory Board, September 30th, 11:00am, Red Mountain Community Room.
- Community Cinema Series- Makers: Women in Space, October 9th, 6pm, Dobson Ranch Library.
- Celebrate Mesa, October 18th, from 5pm-9pm at the Red Mountain Soccer Complex.

Mr. Moon announced of the 3rd Annual Multi-Cultural Conference at the Chandler-Gilbert Community College on October 11th from 7am-4pm.

12. Discuss and take action on scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

- Next meeting will be held on October 22nd, 2014.

13. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:02pm.

Submitted By:



Ruth Giese,
Diversity Program Administrator